

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/066 W
-----062787 102038Z /66

R 101849Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4549
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 05140

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: PSOE SECGEN PROPOSES DROPPING TERM "MARXISM";
OTHER PSOE LEADERS COMMENT

REF: MADRID 4800

1. PSOE SECGEN FELIPE GONZALEZ HAS STIRRED EXCITED
SPECULATION HERE WITH HIS DECLARATION TO REPORTERS
IN BARCELONA MAY 8 THAT HE WOULD PROPOSE, IN THE NEXT
PARTY CONGRESS (SET FOR DECEMBER 1978) THAT THE WORD
"MARXISM" BE DROPPED FROM THE PARTY PROGRAM. THE TERM
WAS ONLY ADDED TO THE PROGRAM IN 1976, SAID GONZALEZ,
AND WAS BEING USED BY THE RIGHT TO THE PSOE'S DETRIMENT.

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2. WHILE ASSERTING HE DID NOT KNOW IF HIS PROPOSAL
WOULD SUCCEED, GONZALEZ ALSO NOTED HE "DID NOT MIND
BEING CALLED A SOCIAL DEMOCRAT", AND POINTED OUT THAT
THE ADDITIONAL VOTES NEEDED FOR HIS PARTY TO TAKE POWER
WERE NOT TO BE FOUND TO ITS LEFT, BUT RATHER ON ITS RIGHT.
HE ALSO DID NOT MIND BEING ACCUSED OF "ELECTORALISM",
HE SAID, SINCE IN A DEMOCRACY WHAT COUNTS ARE VOTES.

3. WHILE CENTRIST AND CONSERVATIVE LEADERS EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT GONZALEZ WAS SINCERE AND WAS SIGNALLING A VEER TO THE RIGHT, AND PCE SEC GEN SANTIAGO CARRILLO OBSERVED ACCURATELY HE HAD ALWAYS SAID THE PSOE WAS NOTHING BUT A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GROUPING, EARLY REACTION FROM OTHER PSOE LEADERS WAS MIXED, WITH MODERATE ENRIQUE MUGICA INDICATING AGREEMENT, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY LUIS YANEZ POINTING OUT IT WAS A PERSONAL POSITION OF GONZALEZ, AND MAVERICK RADICAL PABLO CASTELLANO TALKING OF A "RETURN TO THE STONE AGE" AND HINTING GONZALEZ SHOULD RESIGN. IN ADDITION, THE PSOE'S CATALAN GROUP ISSUED A STATEMENT OF ABSOLUTE DISAGREEMENT WITH GONZALEZ.

4. ALFONSO GUERRA, GENERALLY CONSIDERED THE PARTY'S UNOFFICIAL NUMBER 2, DECLARED MAY 9 THAT NO ONE HAD SAID THE PARTY WOULD ABANDON MARXISM AS AN IDEOLOGICAL FACTOR. "NO SOCIALIST PARTY IN EUROPE DEFINES ITSELF AS MARXIST" SAID GUERRA (THEREBY ECHOING A LONG-STANDING CRITICISM OF THE PSOE MADE HERE), "BECAUSE THE TIME OF IDEOLOGICAL SECTS HAS PASSED; MARXISM IS NOT A DOGMA, BUT RATHER A METHOD OF ANALYSIS... I OF COURSE AM A MARXIST". GONZALEZ THE SAME DAY STOOD BY HIS EARLIER REMARKS, AGREEING WITH GUERRA THAT MARXIST METHODOLOGY WAS NOT TO BE ABANDONED, REITERATING HIS POINT ABOUT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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NEED FOR MORE VOTES AND WHERE THEY WERE TO BE OBTAINED, AND EXPLAINING THAT POTENTIAL NON-MARXIST MEMBERS OF THE PSOE SHOULD NOT FEEL EXCLUDED BY A PARTY SELF-DEFINITION AS MARXIST. THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MET THE SAME DAY, BUT MADE NO STATEMENT AFTERWARD.

5. POLITICAL COMMENTATORS IMMEDIATELY BEGAN RE-DRAWING THE PARTY MAP, ESSENTIALLY TO SHOW THE PSOE AND THE UCD LOSING SOME MEMBERS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE OUTER FLANKS (THE PCE AND THE CONSERVATIVE AP) IN THE PROCESS OF JOINING TOGETHER TO FORM THE NEXT GOVERNMENT. FUELING THE SPECULATION WAS GUERRA'S UNSUBSTANTIATED DECLARATION MAY 7 THAT NO LESS THAN FIVE UCD CABINET MINISTERS HAD INDIVIDUALLY APPROACHED THE PSOE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER REGARDING SOME KIND OF ADHESION.

6. THE SPECULATION IS NEVERTHELESS HASTY, FOR IT PRESUPPOSES DEVELOPMENTS IN BOTH PARTIES WHICH MAY NOT OCCUR. FOR ALL OF THE UCD'S INTERNAL DIFFERENCES (MADRID 4701), IT IS HIGHLY UNCERTAIN THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF IT WOULD GO ALONG WITH FUSION WITH THE PSOE IN THE SHORT TERM. AND TO MAKE FUSION BROADLY

ACCEPTABLE WITHIN THE UCD, THE PSOE WOULD HAVE TO ESTABLISH CREDIBLE CENTER-LEFT, NOT LEFT, CREDENTIALS, TO HEAD OFF THE MUCH-FEARED RIGHT-LEFT POLARIZATION OF THE COUNTRY.

7. AS FOR THE PSOE, THE BATTLE LINES ARE BEING DRAWN ON THE NARROWER, SOMEWHAT SPECIAL "MARXIST" ISSUE, AND DESPITE THE COMMENTS ALREADY HEARD HERE TO THE EFFECT THAT IF GONZALEZ WANTS IT, GONZALEZ CAN GET IT, THE

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OUTCOME IS FAR FROM ASSURED. THE PRINCIPAL INTERNAL REALITY OF THE PSOE IS THE GAP BETWEEN THE RELATIVELY MODERATE LEADERSHIP AND THE MORE RADICAL PARTY BASE, A GAP WHICH HAS OCCASIONED MORE THAN ONE COMPROMISE -- SUCH AS THE INSERTION OF THE TERM "MARXIST" IN THE DECEMBER 1976 PARTY CONGRESS. AND EVEN IF THE TERM IS DROPPED IN 1978, THERE WILL HAVE BEEN ENOUGH INTERNAL OPPOSITION TO THE CHANGE IN THE MEANTIME SO THAT SOME DOUBTS MAY WELL LINGER AS TO WHAT THE PARTY IN TOTO REALLY STANDS FOR.

8. NEITHER THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOMEWHAT FUZZY OUTCOME

NOR THE UNABASHED ELECTORAL MOTIVATION OF THE GONZALEZ
STATEMENT, HOWEVER, SHOULD DETRACT FROM ITS IMPORTANCE
IN SIGNALLING AN EFFORT TO GIVE THE PSOE A MORE MODERATE
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TILT. SHOULD GONZALEZ IN FACT SUCCEED -- AND WHILE HE
WILL BE OPPOSED, HIS IMPORTANCE TO THE PSOE'S ELECTORAL
STRENGTH IS WELL-RECOGNIZED -- THE EVOLUTION OF THE
PSOE TOWARD MODERATION, TOWARD SOMETHING LIKE COMPATI-
BILITY WITH THE OTHER SOCIALIST PARTIES OF WESTERN
EUROPE AND THUS WITH EUROPEAN AND ATLANTIC INSTITUTIONS,
MAY HAVE BEEN GIVEN A MAJOR BOOST. EATON

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